Art Cranes for Railways

510.SHRI V.N. GADGIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether C & AG has passed strictures on the Railway Ministry for improper purchase of ART cranes;

(b) whether order for the purchase of ART cranes was placed without inviting proper tenders;

(c) whether rejection of the cheaper offer of M/s Kirow for supply of the cranes has resulted in extra expenditure of about 60 crores;

(d) whether the cranes supplied by M/s Gottwald were defective; and

(e) whether the certificate of the Commissioner of Safety was produced as required by the Railways Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) A Para No. 4.1.2 regarding import of High Capacity 140T Diesel Powered Break Down cranes has been included in the C & AG's report for the year ended March 1998 (Report No. 9 of 1999 (Railways).

(b) No, Sir. A proper limited tender was issued to M/s Gottwald, Germany and M/s Cowans Sheldon, U.K., which are proven sources for supply of 140T Accident Relief Train cranes used for restoration works in cases of accidents.

(c) No, Sir. The offer of M/s Kirow being unsolicited was never opened and therefore no comparison is possible.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Approval of Commissioner of Safety is always taken for issuing speed certificate for any new design of rolling stock and such a certificate has been obtained in the case of these cranes also.

Scam in supply of wooden sleepers to Railways

511. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item, appearing in the Hindu dated the 20th August, 1999 regarding scam in supply of wooden sleepers to the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.